



## The Benefits of Membership

Member benefits are a cornerstone of our Society. These have changed over the years in response to changes in the needs of members, changes in the format of publications, and other trends in the activities of the Society. Back in the “old days,” in the era of paper journals, an important member benefit was the copy of the *Journal* that arrived in the mail each month. In those days, having a personal copy of the *Journal* saved a trip to the library each time you wanted to find a paper. With the advent of online publishing, physical trips to the library are no longer necessary to look up journal articles, as we can access these from our desks through our computers.

Our Society has been in the forefront of the shift to electronic publishing and, as this has developed, we have moved away from paper as the primary mode of journal delivery to our members. At the same time, our range of titles has steadily grown to include *Interface*, *Electrochemical and Solid-State Letters* and, more recently, *ECS Transactions*. Electronic delivery of all of these has been consolidated in the ECS Digital Library. In view of all these changes, and of corresponding changes in the nature of scientific publishing worldwide, it was appropriate to review member benefits and restructure them to better reflect member needs in the new environment. Thus, our Board of Directors at the recent Phoenix Meeting approved a comprehensive new package of benefits for our members.

Reflecting the reality that our members typically access scientific information online, this new benefits package includes comprehensive online access to all titles in our Digital Library. Members may access the *Journal of The Electrochemical Society*, *Electrochemical and Solid-State Letters*, and *ECS Transactions*, including the entire archive, from their computers and may download 100 full-text articles from any of this content. They also have full access to *Meeting Abstracts* and to *Interface*. This represents significantly improved access to our Digital Library for our members. The range of choice offered is considerably enhanced and members can select exactly the articles they need. Examination of usage patterns has shown that 100 downloads per year will fully meet the requirements of almost all of our members, but additional article packs will be available at a discounted rate for the small number of members who may require additional access. ECS also now has a staff member dedicated to working with librarians, and a new institutional subscription plan, to ensure that all members have the access they need, either through personal or library subscriptions.

Other member benefits include special rates for meeting registration, a subscription to *Interface*, and substantial discounts on monographs and proceeding volumes, as well as on paper and CD-ROM copies of both the *Journal* and *Letters*. Benefits also include access to an online directory of our almost 8,000 members in over 70 countries. This unique resource makes it easy to contact a colleague with expertise on any of a vast range of topics. Personally, I have found that the most rewarding member benefit is the opportunity to associate and “compare notes” with other members of our diverse Society on scientific activities of common interest.

I can remember speculating, in the early days, that electronic publication would greatly reduce costs compared with paper publication. I assume that this was a widely-held opinion, since few people contradicted me, although, of course, that may have been just out of politeness. In any case, I was wrong: online publishing is, in fact, very costly and most science publishing is now done by large commercial enterprises. ECS is one of a small number of scholarly societies that continue to publish their own journals. As such, we have a different emphasis and a different set of priorities than commercial publishers. Our primary concern is the dissemination of the high-quality scientific work of our authors to as wide a readership as possible. I am sure you agree that it is important that we continue to do this and that our presence is important to the field of scientific publishing. You can help ensure that we reach as wide a readership as possible by encouraging your institutional library to subscribe to the full range of publications in our Digital Library. Meanwhile our Society will continue to provide our members with state-of-the-art access to our publications.

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